THE REFUGE OF THE VISIBLE WOMAN

“I accept the Castle of Púbol, but with one condition: that you do not come to visit me unless by written invitation.” This condition especially gratified my masochistic feelings and thrilled me: Gala became the impregnable Castle that she had never ceased to be. Intimacy and, above all, familiarity diminish every passion. Rigour of feeling and distance, as demonstrated by the neurotic ceremonial of courtly love, increase passion.

The Gala Dalí Castle of Púbol is remarkable as the mediaeval building in which Salvador Dalí gave material form to an exuberant creative effort centred on a person — Gala — and a purpose: to provide a suitable place of rest and refuge for his wife. With the passage of time this exceptional enclave was to become the painter’s last studio and the mausoleum of his muse. Of the places that make up the so-called Dalí Triangle, this is the most austere, and the one associated above all with Gala and with the last phase of the artist’s creative output. It is a place of isolation, a melancholy place with the Prussianian air of a search for a lost world, with deeply subjective associations.

The Castell’s Dalinian history begins in 1968. That year, with the construction of the Theatre-Museum-Figueres, Dalí initiated the search for a castle not too far from Portlligat, which was to be a gift for Gala. When he saw Púbol, near the Santuari dels Àngels chapel where the couple were married in 1958, the decision was made. Even before the purchase had been finalized, the restoration work began.

In creating the whole aesthetic universe of the castle, Dalí benefited from the personal involvement of Gala and the technical support of his friend Emili Puignau, a master builder. The first step was to reinforce the existing structure of the building, because Dalí wanted to preserve the visibly deteriorated aspect of the exterior walls as testimony to the passage of time. The next phase was the remodelling of the garden, with Dalí opting for an Italianate layout, which has been overwhelming by the plants that he and Gala chose for it, and a series of architectural and sculptural interventions such as the sculptures of elephants with crows on the rumps or the fountain shaped like the head of a monkfish that seem to seek to recreate the effect of the famous monsters in the Bomarzo garden near Rome.

Dalí applied his artistic versatility to transforming the interiors of the castle, which he redecorated and decorated on a great detail, on the basis of working drawings now in the hands of the Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí, as the designs for the fireplaces or the glass table-cum-skylight. He also painted pictures to adorn the interior: the large oil entitled Gala-Salvador Dalí, such as the designs for the fireplaces or the glass table-cum-skylight. He decorated in great detail on the basis of working drawings now in the fonds of the Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí, and painted the ceilings in the Hall of Shields (‘I took pleasure in decorating the ceilings so that when Gala raises her eyes she will see me always in her sky,’ Dalí said), the false door, the painted radiator covering the costumes from Gala served as a storeroom for works that Dalí was having returned to him himself was living in the castle he used the dining room as his studio, Gala’s blue room became the result of a fire in the room where he slept, which led to his being hospitalized. When Dalí

After the death of Gala, who is interred in the Tithe Hall where subjects historically paid their tribute to their feudal lord, Dalí himself lived in the castle until he suffered severe burns as the result of a fire in the room where he slept, which led to his being hospitalized. When Dalí himself was living in the castle he used the dining room as his studio, Gala’s blue room became his bedroom and the attic of the house where outfits from Gala’s wardrobe are now on display herself was living in the castle he used the dining room as his studio, Gala’s blue room became the result of a fire in the room where he slept, which led to his being hospitalized. When Dalí

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